We claim:

1.   A method for allocating resources to accomplish a system objective comprising:

       a) identifying a plurality of goals for accomplishing a system objective,

       b) defining an ordering relation on said plurality of goals, whereby including goals, included goals, and unrelated goals are defined;

       c) applying said ordering relation to said plurality of goals to create a lattice,

       d) assigning a value to each goal, wherein the value of each including goal is apportioned among its included goals and the value of each included goal is assigned by summing the value apportioned to it by its including goals; and

       e) allocating resources to each goal using said assigned values.

2.   A method of claim 1, wherein said assigned values are uniformly apportioned.

3.   A method of claim 1, where said assigned values are user-preference apportioned.

4.   A method of claim 1, wherein the assigning a value to each goal comprises,

       defining the relative contribution of an included goal to the accomplishment of an including goal.

5.   A method of claim 1, wherein the assigning of a value to each goal comprises:

       assuming a relative utility value for each of including goal that are defined by the ordering relation to be on a layer of the lattice having a highest level of abstraction; and

       apportioning the relative utility values of each including goal among included goals that are defined by the ordering relation to be on a layer of the lattice having a lower level of abstraction,

       where the relative utility values are apportioned according to the relative contribution of each included goal or task to the accomplishment of an including goal, and

       wherein the values apportioned to each included goal define the relative utility values of the subservient system goals or tasks, the sum of the relative utility values that are apportioned from an including goal being equal the numerical value of that included goal.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the assigning of a relative utility value to each goal comprises:

summing all relative utility values apportioned to a goal to achieve the relative utility value for that goal.

5   7.   The method of claim 6, further comprising:

determining a priority among goals by comparing the relative utility values assigned thereto.

8.   The method of claim 5, further comprising:

10   allocating business resources among the goals based on the relative utility values assigned to the tasks in order to improve the effectiveness of the business resources in accomplishing the system goals.

9.   The method of claim 5, further comprising:

collecting sensory input from different sensors based on the relative utility values
15   assigned to the tasks.

10.   A computer readable medium storing a computer program that measures a relative utility for a plurality of goals, the computer program comprising:

a first code segment that receives input comprising a plurality of goals for implementing a system objective;

20   a second code segment that defines an ordering relation among the identified goals, whereby including goals, included goals, and unrelated goals are define;

a third code segment that applies said ordering relation to create a goal lattice; and

a fourth code segment for assigning a value to each goal, wherein the value of each
25   including goal is apportioned among its included goals and the value of each included goal is assigned by summing the value apportioned to it by its including goals.

11. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein the second code segment includes a code segment defining the ordering relationship as a graphical representation of the lattice in which the goals are arranged on several layers,

each layer of goals having a different level of abstraction relative to performing the system objective.

12. The computer readable medium of claim 10, wherein the fourth code segment that assigns a value to each goal comprises:

a code segment that assumes a relative utility value for each of including goal that are defined by the ordering relation to be on a layer of the lattice having a highest level of abstraction; and

a code segment that apportions the relative utility values of each including goal among included goals that are defined by the ordering relation to be on a layer of the lattice having a lower level of abstraction,

where the relative utility values are apportioned according to the relative contribution of each included goal or task to the accomplishment of an including goal, and

wherein the values apportioned to each included goal define the relative utility values of the subservient system goals or tasks, the sum of the relative utility values that are apportioned from an including goal being equal the numerical value of that included goal.

13. The computer readable medium of claim 12, wherein the code segment that assigns relative utility values to goals comprises:

a code segment that sums all relative utility values apportioned to each particular goal to achieve the relative utility value for that goal.

14. The computer readable medium of claim 10, further comprising:

a fifth code segment that determines a priority among tasks by comparing the relative utility values assigned thereto.

15. The computer readable medium of claim 10, further comprising:

a fifth code segment that allocates business resources among the tasks based on the relative utility values assigned to the goals in order to improve the effectiveness of the business resources in accomplishing the system objective.

16.   The computer readable medium of claim 10, further comprising:

5   a fifth code segment that collects sensory input from different sensors based on the relative utility values assigned to the goals.